

All communications for this paper should be accompanied by the name of the author, not necessarily for publication but as an evidence of good faith on the part of the writer. Write only on one side of the paper. Be particularly careful in giving names and dates to have the letters and figures plain and distinct.

WHAT TIME HE WENT.

What time he went to rest—
His tired hands folded o'er his sinless breast,
I said: "The glory and the grace and light
Have left the day, and darkness holds the night."
Though a voice whispered: "Doth not
God do best?"
What time he went to rest.
What time he went to rest
And his cold lips were to his mother's breast
With a last kiss, I said: "Eternity
Is his, and life hath no sweet lips for me!"
And still that voice: "Doth not the Lord
do best?"
What time he went to rest.
What time he went to rest
For me life's sun sank down the hopeless west—
The roses left the living dawn,
The birds were silent and the spring was gone!
And still that voice: "Shall not the Lord
do best?"
What time he went to rest.
Still, still the sunlight streams,
But ever, in the mystery of dreams,
I see his mother kissing him; I see
His dear arms like a necklace circling me!
And evermore: "Will not the Lord
do best?"
And him at rest—at rest!
—Frank L. Stanton, in Atlanta Constitution.

MY STRANGE PATIENT.

By William T. Nichols

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XVII.—CONTINUED.

It was difficult to imagine that the gentleman in question, in his intimacy with my friends, had been entirely actuated by regard for an elderly person half mad about her health. I felt something akin to a pang of jealousy, though I tried to conceal my interest as I asked:

"Trent was a curious place to run across such an admirer of trans-Atlantic civilization, was it not?"

"Our meeting was purely accidental. We were lunching in the restaurant of one of the hotels when he came in and took the table next to ours. We hardly recognized him at first; he had aged much since we saw him last. We were delighted at the meeting, and I think it pleased him as well. He told us that he had been traveling extensively in this country, but evidently he had not enjoyed the life here. In fact, aunt and he fell into a discussion of the manners and customs of the good people of the United States. You should have heard her; she is patriotic to the core. She told him he had had no opportunity to learn how the people really live; and then she insisted that he should come here, for a few days at least, to get just the experience in which he was lacking. He accepted the invitation, after a little hesitation. Honestly, I think he was glad to escape the hotels for awhile. Last evening he and aunt talked for hours about their travels, about this place and its people. She told him how she was gaining under your care, and how fortunate she was in securing such skillful attendance in the country. Perhaps it is as well that you didn't hear her. Flattery is disastrous sometimes, isn't it?"

"You should know better than I," she laughed lightly.
"Nothing but good was said of you," she went on. "Aunt dwelt upon your success with her, and your regular attendance upon the old man who lives over there." She pointed to the knoll, with which we were almost abreast, being distant from it hardly 100 yards.
"She told him what a hermit existence Mr.—Mr. Lamar—that is his name, isn't it?—seems to prefer."
"Was he interested?"
"Shall I tell you the plain truth? It may spoil the story."
"The truth always," said I.
"At first he was interested, but very soon he delicately managed to change the subject."

"I don't blame him," I muttered, with a glance at the house showing above the scrubby trees. Her glance followed mine.

"Dr. Morris," she asked, after a pause, "is that Mr. Lamar deaf? When I tried to rouse somebody in his house the other day, the place was as unresponsive as a tomb."

"The comparison is excellent," said I, avoiding a direct answer to her query, as most men with an aversion to unnecessary falsehoods would have avoided it. "The servant is deaf, and her master is sometimes so self-absorbed that he is even worse off than she."

"What a wretched existence. Is his health altogether gone?"
"He is more comfortable now than when he came here."

I knew that she was studying my face, but I kept my eyes averted.

"It is strange that in this gossiping village so little is known of him," she went on. "One hears that he is a retired brewer from the south; but that seems to be the limit of knowledge of his antecedents."

"It is the accepted version," said I.

"Really, I know little of his history before he retained me."

Our craft was nearing the mouth of the tidal stream, and a few more vigorous strokes shot it out upon the smooth waters of the bay, hardly rippled by the gentle breeze. To the north were two sloops crawling along on their way to the village. To the south and east curved the long tongue of land which formed the boundary of the bay on two sides and sheltered it from the ocean swell. Not more than half a mile from where we were, a catboat lay at anchor, with a solitary figure lolling over her side. The whole scene was full of the restfulness of the summer afternoon, and the spell of it stole upon us, as if we left behind with the land its anxieties, sorrows and fears. For a time the boat drifted on, propelled more by a current of the bay than by the occasional strokes of the oar. The girl was half reclining, trailing one of her hands in the water and with the other toying with the handle of her parasol, the shaft of which rested on her shoulder. We were both day-dreaming, when a hail came to rouse us from our reveries. Looking up, I found that we were close to the anchored craft, and that Johnson, its occupant, had given us warning none too soon. In a moment we were alongside the catboat, and his hand had caught the gunwale of the skiff.

"Halloo, Johnson!" said I, "what sort of fishing are you doing here? Business or fun?"

"Fun mostly, sir," he answered, pointing to a hand-line hanging over the side. "Nothing of a bigness to be caught here. How does the lady like the boat?"

"Very much indeed," said Miss Gray. "You'll find she works easy, ma'am," said he.

"We discovered a lot of dried mud on the thwarts," said I. "You can see some of it yet."

"The boat was as clean as a whistle yesterday. Somebody must have been out in her 'tween then and now."

"I believe she was in use this morning," I admitted.

"Well, whoever it was," Johnson declared, after a survey of the skiff, "he must have landed somewhere on the flats, where there was mud, and tracked it in when he came aboard ag'in. Here's another of his marks." And he sent a long arm into the bow of our little vessel and picked up the stump of a cigarette from the planking. As he held it out for inspection the paper unrolled, showing the dark grains of the tobacco.

"I've seen that sorter cigarette before, Doc, and I guess you have, too, but not round these parts," he said. "Daggoes fancy 'em."

"And you don't, eh? Well, I'm of your way of thinking, but the gentleman who was out in the boat this morning wasn't. Come up to the house tomorrow, will you, and give Miss Gray a sailing lesson?"

"Ay, ay, sir," said Johnson. "The boat's very clever under sail. I'll be glad to show her any little p'ints she needs to pick up."

"Your colonel can't be called a very tidy mariner, no matter what his other virtues may be," said I, as we reentered the inlet.

"Why do you call him my colonel?" the girl asked, and it seemed to me that I detected a slight increase in her color. "He is a friend of my aunt's, hardly of mine, though I've always found him very agreeable."

"And attentive?" I hazarded under the spur of revived jealousy.

"Scarcely that," she said, quietly. "though he was always most kind to me."

The spur went deeper.
"Oh, of course," said I, rashly; "and he must have had such delightful opportunities."

"He is a charming man," she answered, with a smile which filled me with misery. I dare say she read me easily, and was quite prepared to prolong the teasing had the chance been given her. But, looking over my shoulder, my glance fell upon Lamar's somber abode. The sight of it made me silent, and, suddenly settling down to the oars, I sent the light craft swiftly on toward its mooring-place.

XVIII.

It is possible that men exist who, in the period succeeding the discovery that they have undergone the mental metamorphosis commonly styled falling in love, and preceding the critical moment when the object of adoration confesses her sentiments of reciprocity or declares the wooing to have been in vain, maintain their clearness of understanding, their evenness of temper, and their soundness of judgment. It is conceivable, I admit, that such men live; but it has never been my lot to enjoy the privilege of acquaintance with one of them. I do not mean that when love flies in at the window common sense rushes out at the door; but I do hold that the new-comer is prone to exert, throughout that period of storm and stress, a semi-paralyzing influence over the old tenant, making him sadly untrustworthy at times when the demands upon him are greatest. Therefore I regard myself as no exception to the general rule—general, that is, so far as my observation goes—in having followed irrational courses and behaved erratically during three weeks or more of dissipation, uncertainty, and doubt. For one of them I made myself

miserable through jealousy of the man Dorothy's aunt had been pleased to make her guest. Without a shadow of proof to support the fabric of speculation I laboriously built up, I contrived to persuade myself that he was a rival, favored, of course, for his wealth and position. Even from his hasty departure I gained little comfort. The bugaboo, once installed, was not to be overthrown by such a trifle. Full of gloomy forebodings, I waited for news that he would return, plotting, in my more cheerful intervals, wild schemes for turning his triumphant reappearance into a by-word and a mockery. Once I caught myself reading with vast approval summaries of famous cases in a text-book on toxicology. The volume had been picked up hap-hazard, but its terse account of several noted matters caught my fancy, and I read on until some noise about the house, interrupting my recreation, brought me to a realization of the ridiculousness of the performance—for there were still moments when I could understand that I was playing the fool. Perhaps, also, the plea might be entered that at this time I was a victim of a recurrence of my old perplexities, recent events having served again to force them upon me with even greater vividness than before.

The jealous fit was ended by a letter which the late visitor sent from New York to Mrs. Loring. In it he expressed deep regret that circumstances would prevent him from completing his visit. Business, he explained, called him abroad, and before the misadventure reached her he would be well on his way to Liverpool. I heard the news with a decent effort at an appearance of regret, and from that moment had a more friendly impression regarding the gallant colonel.

It had been my intention to speak of him to Lamar, rather because of his Brazilian interests, of which my client might know something, than because of his morning cruise about the channels of the marsh or the abrupt termination of his stay. Mrs. Loring's account of the colonel's manner of life indicated that he was a chronic tourist, with no very active concern in happenings in his own country, so long as they did not interfere with his sources of revenue. One thing after another, however, occurred to prevent a mention of him. One day Lamar was busy with his experiments; the next, for some reason of his own, he cut short our talk; the next he was back in his laboratory. Thus, before an opportunity was offered to tell my bit of news, its value appeared to have been lost through staleness, and, in the end, fresher topics took its place when Lamar showed a willingness to indulge in a brief gossip. So it happened that he heard nothing of the incident which had caused me so many hours of unnecessary perturbation.

Jones, meanwhile, had been making steady progress, and, while Banks and I saw him daily, there was little need of our attendance. We learned that



We were the best of friends.

he would leave the neighborhood as soon as his removal could be attempted with safety, but he told us nothing further of his plans. I tried occasionally to lead him to speak of his reasons for coming to Rodneytown, but he was reticent, and I had to be content with the explanation given by Lamar. Dorothy Gray came often to read to him, and he manifested much gratitude for her kindness; but even to her he would say next to nothing of his history or his projects.

Banks' wrist was still weak, but his recovery from the sprain had gone far enough to enable him to circulate in his old fashion among his patients, and my duties as his coadjutor were ended. He was beginning, though, to renew his discourses about his desire to secure a partner and practically to retire, and it was clear that he would soon make me a direct offer. It was only fair that I should prepare to give a definite answer, but I realized that my plans were even more unsettled than ever. There was a new disturbing element in the situation. Could I but foretell what Dorothy would answer were a certain question put to her, then Dr. Banks might be answered, in turn, so soon as he chose to speak. But what would the young lady say?

Yes, what would she say? Truly I was far from sanguine. I could find no reason for confidence, in spite of many soulful efforts to discover one. We were the best of friends; we were together daily, sometimes for hours at a time; we read together, walked together, and drove together. We had interests in common; in some lines of thought our beliefs were akin. Such things

were well enough in their way, but what ground of hope did they furnish? Would not a blush, a sigh, have more meaning? Frequently I read dissertations of the symptoms of the love malady, but surely nowhere had I noted good-fellowship set forth as a distinguishing mark of passion. Then, too, there was the difficulty of the bread-and-butter problem. What business had I to contemplate matrimony, with no well-defined idea how even one mouth was to be filled, in the event of a break with the man who would remain my paymaster no longer than suited his convenience? My savings would cut but a poor figure on a war-chest for a family campaign. Besides, the girl was supposedly well-to-do, and certainly was the heiress of her aunt, whose wealth appeared to be sufficient to enable her to travel wherever she desired, and to pay the bills of high-priced specialists, who charged with an appreciation of the fact that their patients would need to take nothing with them out of this world. It would not be pleasing to be classed as a fortune-hunter. All the philosophy available would not remove the sting from that reproach.

Meditating these things, I fell into habits entirely reprehensible from the standpoint of everyday sanity. I sat up late at night. I smoked more strong tobacco than was for my good. I took to moping and violent language. On the whole, it was fortunate that my practice was limited—fortunate for both me and my supposititious patients. Whether anybody guessed the character of my thoughts, or fathomed my moods, was a matter almost of indifference. I told myself that the mask should always be worn in the presence of Mrs. Loring and her niece; as for the others, their opinion did not count. As a matter of fact, I imagine that my secret was known to all the women thereabouts, and perhaps to some of the men. Banks now and then cracked jokes at my expense of a character which gave ground to believe that he had made a shrewd diagnosis of my malady. But, when all is said and done, the simple truth is that I was as nearly at my wits' end, even with the ghost of the colonel's rivalry exorcised, as probably half the adult males of the nation would own themselves to have been on various occasions, would they but make confession.

Mrs. Loring was unquestionably the better for her life in the country. She still kept herself under the discipline of an invalid, though the precaution was entirely unnecessary. Her appetite was excellent, her nerves were almost forgotten, the daily record of her symptoms was limited to an entry of a few lines, in place of the pages she had covered at first. She often failed to remember that I was her physician, and suffered me to depart without hearing a word bearing on her long-cherished aches and agonies. She had become acquainted with everybody in the village; nobody knew better than she the true inwardness of every piece of mild scandal retailed from one end of it to the other. She was hand in glove with the ringleaders in its social diversions, and was the moving spirit in an enterprise which promised to eclipse anything of the sort ever attempted in Rodneytown. This was no less than a "Fete Internationale," as the programme had it, in which youths and maidens of many lands were to be personated by the young people of the village. There were to be tableaux, recitations, music and dancing, and altogether a somewhat ambitious list of diversions. Mrs. Loring had assumed the responsibility of designing the costumes, a duty which she was well fitted to perform, for she was blessed with a keen eye for color effects, and her travels had made her a trustworthy source of information regarding the details of the picture it was proposed to present. There were no suggestions of invalidism in her as she bustled about on her congenial tasks; the busier she was, the greater her content. The fete was to be a mental and physical tonic, more beneficial than any possible combination of chemicals. This I realized, but with the perverse pessimism brought about by my season of unrest, I feared that it would result in opening her eyes to the truth that she needed no physician. And when that discovery was made, how long would she and her niece tarry in that quiet neighborhood?

The weather about this time took a turn for the worse; for 48 hours a dense fog hung over the coast. It thinned somewhat by the third morning. The banks of mist were drifting seaward when I plodded across the plain to the house on the knoll. Lamar, who was awaiting me in the living-room, appeared to be giving himself up to idleness, for there were no books on the table at which he sat, and he seemed to be unusually willing to engage in desultory chat. After a little, he told me that he had been feeling far from well for some weeks, and that the depressing weather had aggravated his trouble.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Difference.

Bilkins (in a rage)—Hang the confounded luck! Now my wife has smashed another hundred dollar vase, and—

Little Willie—Oh, no; it was Marie, the new pretty French maid.

Bilkins—Oh—ah—ahem! Accidents will happen.—N. Y. World.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

International Lesson for December 30, 1896—The Birth of Christ—Matthew 2:1-12.

[Arranged from Peloubet's Notes.]
GOLDEN TEXT.—And the angel said unto them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.—Luke 2:10.

THE SECTION included in this lesson, the whole of which should be read, includes John 1:1-18; Luke 1:1-80, and Matt. 1:1-25; 2:1-12.

TIME.—The last of December, B. C. 5, four years before the commencement of our common era. A. D. 1 (Anno Domini, year of the Lord), so that Christ was born 1800, not 1836, years ago. The visit of the wise men was in February, B. C. 4, when Jesus was six or eight weeks old.

PLACE.—Bethlehem, of Judea, a village five or six miles south of Jerusalem. Bethlehem means "House of Bread," a very fitting name for the place where He was born who was the Bread of Life.

LESSON NOTES.

The Birth of Jesus.—V. 1. "Now when Jesus was born:" Jesus, the Divine Son of God, became man by being born of the Virgin Mary: "In Bethlehem of Judea:" probably about December 25, B. C. 5. It is not told in Matthew how Jesus came to be in Bethlehem. For that we turn to Luke. "In the days of Herod the king:" Herod died April 1, B. C. 4 (Lewin's Fasti Sacri) at Jericho, at the age of 70, so that the visit of the wise men must have been a few weeks previous. This Herod was Herod the Great, founder of the Herodian family.

The Wise Men from the East.—V. 2. "Saying: Where is He that is born king of the Jews?" This inquiry more literally translated, is: Where is the born king; that is, the newly born king of the Jews? The magi expected, no doubt, to find him in the capital city and in the royal palace.—Morison.

The Star in the East.—"For we have seen His star in the east:" This must have been a miraculous star, for it went down before them, and stood over the exact place where Jesus was with His mother. But, at the same time, the remarkable conjunction of planets at this time may have had something to do with it.

Seeking and Finding.—Vs. 3-11. 3. "When Herod the king had heard these things:" The tidings would run like an electric shock through the palace of the usurping Herod.—Trench. "He was troubled," agitated, disturbed, lest he should lose his throne and his power.

4. "And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes:" The chief priests were probably the heads of the 24 courses into which the sons of Aaron were divided (2 Chron. 23:8; Luke 1:5), but the term may have included those who had, though only for a time, held the office of high priest. The "scribes" were the interpreters of the law, casuists and collectors of the traditions of the elders, for the most part Pharisees.—Ellicott. "He demanded (rather, inquired) of them where Christ:" in the original The Christ, not the proper name, but the Messiah, the official title of the promised Deliverer, "should be born." What do your Scriptures say? What is your expectation?

5. "And they said:" i. e., the chief priests, etc. The answer seems to have been given without any hesitation, as a matter perfectly well understood and settled by Divine authority.—Alexander. "Thus it is written:" What is quoted in the next verse. "By the prophet:" Micah, in chap. 5:2.

6. "And thou, Bethlehem:" This is quoted freely from the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament), just as such quotations were popularly made at that time, for there were no Bibles in circulation, and quotations must be made chiefly as remembered from hearing them read. "Shall come a governor:" A leader, guide or ruler.

7. "Then Herod . . . privily (privately) called the wise men:" Privily, for he was already hatching, still more privily, his malicious plot. "Inquired of them diligently:" or, rather, ascertained from them accurately. "What time the star appeared:" That he might know what was the exact age of the infant whom he wished to slay.—Abbott.

8. "He sent (or directed) them to Bethlehem:" a short six miles from Jerusalem. "Search diligently:" So far as the mission became known, it would impress people with the belief that he, too, shared their hopes, and was ready to pay his homage to the new-born king.

9. "Lo, the star:" Unexpectedly the star they had seen in the east (it was not now in the east, but in the south) appeared to them in the evening as they went toward Bethlehem. "Stood over where the young child was:" i. e., over the house, as implied by verse 11; not merely over the village of Bethlehem.

VII. Reverence and Gifts.—Vs. 11, 12. "And fell down:" In the oriental manner of showing homage and worship. "Opened their treasures:" The word points to caskets, or chests, which they had brought with them.—Ellicott. "They presented unto Him gifts:" According to the oriental custom in paying visits to royalty. Setting forth greater truths than they knew, they offered to the Son of Man and Son of God myrrh, hinting at the resurrection of the dead; the royal gold, and frankincense that breathes prayer.

12. "Being warned of God:" In a dream, in the same manner as God may have spoken to them before. "Into their own country another way:" They could easily go from Bethlehem to the Jordan river, leaving Jerusalem to the north and west.